



Focus on Urban Waters Initiative

from Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program

The Problem

Many of Washington State's urban waters are filled with dangerous chemicals from industrial sources, contaminated sites, stormwater, municipal wastewater, and businesses that use hazardous wastes. Once in the water, these chemicals enter the food chain and threaten human health and the environment. Among the troubled waterways:

- The Spokane River has high concentrations of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxins/furans; polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) concentrations in fish are the highest in the state.
- Lower Duwamish Waterway sediments are contaminated with PCBs, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, phthalates, and other pollutants.
- Commencement Bay sediments are contaminated by large, single-point polluters and by the thousands of homeowners, small businesses, and vehicles.

Cleaning up these waterways is complicated.

- No obvious PBDE source has been identified for the Spokane River.
- Boat manufacturing and repair, marina operations, airplane parts manufacturing, metals fabrication, combined sewer overflows, and over 100 storm drains contribute to the pollution in the Lower Duwamish Waterway.
- More than 5,000 acres of developed uplands adjacent to Commencement Bay add to its contamination. Recent monitoring data has shown that previous cleanup sites are showing signs of recontamination.

The Solution

We have made significant cleanup investments in Commencement Bay and the Lower Duwamish Waterway. Work is just starting on the Spokane River. We need to protect the accomplishments we have made and continue to make progress on finding and controlling the sources of contamination to these waterways. Ecology will team up with local government to launch the Urban Waters project. The purpose of this project is to find the sources of toxic contamination and help businesses and other entities reduce or eliminate those sources in ways that allow Ecology to measure results. This will help ensure the contaminated waterways become and remain clean.

Ecology is seeking \$2.57 million in the 2007-2009 budget for this effort.

- \$2.03 million from the State Toxics Control Account
- \$540,000 from the Local Toxics Control Account

We will use this money to fund eight positions to carry out this program and fund a contract with the local governments in the three areas to assist in the effort.

The project will make the current cleanup efforts in these three urban waterways more efficient and effective, and provide tools to keep the water clean. It will also avoid creating new cleanup sites and help avoid the need for taxpayers to pay for cleaning up the same site twice.

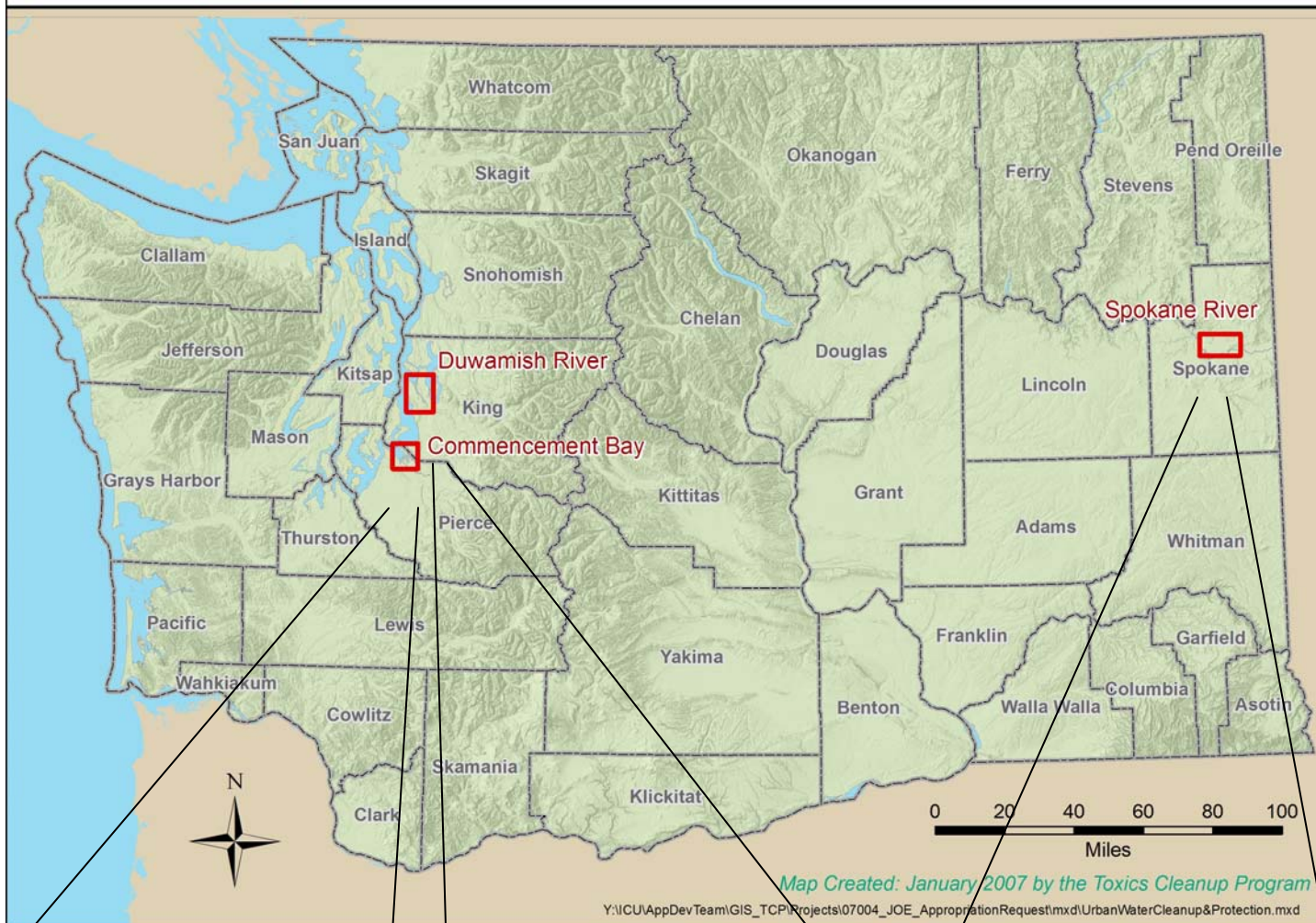
Over the next two years, the project will:

- Identify potential sources of contamination and protect on-going cleanups.
- Extend sediment monitoring to shallower parts of Puget Sound, closer to potential sources.
- Inspect businesses more often to help them with changes to reduce pollution, cut costs, and keep toxics from harming the environment and people.
- Make sure businesses get the permit(s) they need and that they comply with the permit requirements.

Without Funding

- Toxic chemicals will continue to accumulate in Puget Sound, the Spokane River, and other urban water bodies. This will create new cleanup sites and recontamination of areas we have already cleaned up such as Tacoma's Commencement Bay. This will cost the state and its citizens more money in the end.
- We will lose the ability to partner with local governments on ways to reduce toxic threats.
- We will not be able to provide technical assistance to businesses to help them prevent their contribution to the state's pollution problems. This means businesses will continue to mishandle toxic chemicals causing unnecessary costs and burdens for them, human health, and the environment.

Urban Waters Cleanup and Protection



Commencement Bay

In this area, there are:

- 38 upland state cleanup sites
- 18 upland Superfund sites
- 551 regulated Hazardous Waste Facilities

The focus of this interdisciplinary approach will be on urban stormwater management and control to reduce the introduction of these toxic contaminants. Specifically, we will:

- Identify potential sources of contamination.
- Increase inspections of regulated facilities.
- Assist in the development of appropriate source control measures.
- Provide assistance on toxic reductions and pollution prevention.

This proposal will fund the implementation of a focused permitting and inspection program in Commencement Bay.

Duwamish River

In this area, there are:

- 45 upland state cleanup sites
- 18 upland Superfund sites
- 1,216 regulated Hazardous Waste Facilities

Ecology is the lead agency for controlling current sources of pollution to the river.

EPA is the lead on the remedial investigation/feasibility study.

Ecology has developed the Lower Duwamish Waterway Source Control Strategy and is in the process of developing site-specific Source Control Action Plans.

This proposal will fund the implementation of a focused permitting and inspection program in the Duwamish River area.

Spokane River

Elevated concentrations of PCBs, PBDE (the highest levels in Washington State), dioxin, and metals exist in the Spokane River.

This multi-disciplinary proposal will focus principally on:

- The focused identification of PCBs and PBDEs in the Spokane River.
- Work on controlling metals from the Coeur d'Alene Basin (CDA) Superfund site in Idaho.
- Identification of specific sources of emerging contaminants to the Spokane River.
- Technical assistance to the public and local governments.
- Support for work being undertaken to reduce metal contamination from historical mining practices in the Coeur d'Alene Basin.